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MacArthur Firing Recalled

Fulbright Probe May Ease Senate Tension

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Washington

The bitter word "appeaser" has been flung on the floor of the Senate.

The Republican charge in the Senate has been answered by an almost equally emotional taunt from the chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Only a carefully controlled congressional investigaiton seems capable of bridling the name-calling left after the summit fiasco at Paris and the U-2 incident.

Such an investigation is now to be guided by Senator J. W. Fulbright (D) of Arkansas, whom most senators consider ideally fitted for the job.

Washington likens the situation of the investigation of the dismissal of Gen. Douglas MacArthur by President Truman in 1951, in the midst of the Korean war.

Safety Valve Needed

Here again an explosive mixture of world tension and domestic politics needs a safety valve. Significantly enough, the current U-2 hearing, like the MacArthur hearing, will not be directly open to the press, but the testimony will be screened and then made available.

It was Senator Hugh Scott (R) of Pennsylvania, who startled senators May 23 by asking that Adlai E. Stevenson and Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts come before Congress and "relieve themselves of the curse of suspicion of appeasement."

The charge created extraordinary bitterness, disclosed in the scornful retort by Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri: "I am consoled by the source from which they came."

Later in the day, in a tense [illegible] halted the meeting of [illegible] trigger man in a movie western, Senator Kennedy categorically demanded from the imperturbable Senator Scott the meaning of his charge, and ended with this comment:

"I am delighted that the senator has chosen to withdraw his statement."

Butler Stokes Fires

On the Democratic side, Paul M. Butler, national chairman, who can never seem to stay out of a fight, promptly stoked passions of partisanship still higher by declaring that the Republican administration had been "soft" on communism.

The McCarthy days seemed back again.

Fortunately, calm words came from Senator Fulbright, backed by Republican Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont, a fellow member of the 17-man Foreign Relations Committee (11 Democrats; 6 Republicans).

Senator Fulbright deplored the Scott attack and promised "a reasonable, objective and quiet inquiry."

Senator Aiken, with dry, Yankee humor, said, "It may be all right to shoot off fireworks, but I think we are shooting them off too close to the gas works to be helpful." He added:

"We have gone too far not to have a discreet, judicious, and careful inquiry. . . . I do not see how this type of inquiry can hurt anyone. I should think it might be helpful in the long run."

Inquiry Scheduled

This pointed to an inquiry. One like the MacArthur inquiry now is forthcoming.

The political climate in 1951 was even more passionate than today.

Brilliant, audacious, and irascible [illegible] Washington proposed [illegible] a settlement with the Chinese Communists, General MacArthur issued a statement calling the Chinese Communists industrially unfit to carry on modern war and offering to confer in the field with the Chinese Commander to unify Korea under President Rhee.

The Chinese Communists reacted violently and Washington's allies protested. President Truman—erstwhile Captain Truman of Battery D—on April 11, 1951, at 1 a.m. fired General of the Army Douglas MacArthur.

An outburst of rage resulted, furnishing ammunition for bitter partisan warfare designed to destroy the Democrats. (The late Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio and other Republicans agreed that General MacArthur should be invited to address Congress. Cheering crowds met him in Chicago, New York, and Washington.

Steam Eases Off

Fortunately, a good deal of the fire and smoke generated by [illegible]

[illegible] from May 1 to [illegible]

The 13-man Foreign Relations Committee under former Senator Tom Connally (D) of Texas and the 13-man Armed Services Committee under Senator Richard B. Russell (D) of Georgia held joint hearings.

In essence that is the program for the U-2 inquiry today.

The MacArthur hearings can only be described as sensational.

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